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DOGM
MINERALS PROGRAM
FILE COPY

September 21, 1989

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Holland Shepherd, Reclamation Soils Specialist *HOS*

RE: Site Inspection, Bingham Pit, Kennecott Minerals,
M/035/002, Salt Lake County, Utah

A site inspection was made on August 23, 1989, of the Bingham Pit. Individuals from Kennecott and the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining were present at this inspection. Individuals representing Kennecott included Mr. Michael Gibson, Director of Environmental Affairs, Kennecott Mining, and Mr. Paul Rokich, Revegetation Specialist, Kennecott Mining. Individuals from DOGM included myself, Wayne Hedberg, Minerals Hydrologist, and Henry Sauer, Soils Reclamation Specialist.

This meeting was held at Kennecott to evaluate ongoing reclamation at the mine site and to discuss future reclamation plans for this site. With this meeting, and others, the Division is attempting to become more intimately involved with the reclamation process at the Bingham Pit.

The operator has conducted extensive reclamation on portions of this site already. However, hundreds of acres of waste dump still need to be reclaimed. The operator has been working predominantly on the reclamation and dust control of the tailings pond area over the last few years. Because of the problem of blowing dust and the proximity of large numbers of people, the mine operator has concentrated on controlling dust at the tailings pond facility. In order to control this dust, it has been necessary to initiate a massive revegetation program focused at revegetating all of the tailings pond surface that is not currently being used by the operator. Those areas that have not been revegetated are being constantly treated with water to suppress dust. It is interesting to note, at this point, that during our inspection, gusts of wind were blowing at 40 to 50 miles an hour at the site, stirring up massive clouds of dust. Visibility at times was perhaps 40 to 50 feet.

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Mr. Rokich headed the tour of the mine site or areas of the site that had been reclaimed. Several of these areas had been reclaimed 10 to 15 years ago and Mr. Rokich was eager to show us what kind of vegetation success had occurred at these sites. The sites included: Copper Notch, an old SEAM project; Willow Spring, reclamation of a recent waste dump slide area; and an area east of the mine site, close to Riverton, consisting of some pre-law tailing's ponds. These sites were reclaimed without benefit of topsoil material and were surprisingly well revegetated, given the nature of the material that plants were growing in. Such areas included tailings material as well as waste dump material.

We had previously indicated to the operator that we would like to establish more test plots and do a soils inventory of the site, to get a better handle on the reclamation limitations at this site. Mr. Rokich attempted to impress upon us, during this inspection, that such test plots would not be necessary given that he had already proven that successful revegetation could take place on some of this waste material. Mr. Rokich is not a strong supporter of the use of topsoil material or fertilizer. He repeated, several times, during this inspection, how easy it was for him to reclaim areas of the most adverse conditions. From some of the evidence onsite, it was obvious to us that Mr. Rokich's abilities are not to be questioned.

It will be necessary to conduct further inspections at this site given the extent of the site a good evaluation of the needs and outstanding problems cannot be done in just a day or two. We left the meeting and site inspection with the indication that we would like to schedule a couple more meetings at least this fall, to further evaluate the situation at this mine site.

jb
cc: Michael Gibson, Kennecott Minerals
Lowell Braxton
Wayne Hedberg
Henry Sauer
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